

THE PASTOR IN THE HOUSE OF SORROW.

The pastor is the comfort-bearer to the house of sorrow. He lives and ministers under the command of his Lord, "Comfort ye my people." His heart goes out to those into whose home the angel of death has entered. And yet there is no part of his ministry more delicate or that requires more prudence. The heart is so very tender under bereavement that even words of sympathy may be painful. He may be without personal experience of sorrow, knowing not yet the best way to the heart. Sometimes he feels that the sorrow is so great that he fears to intrude and is silent. But he should remember the special object of his ministry to the afflicted. He should school himself in the sympathy of sorrow, so that, even if inexperienced, he may be able to speak a word in season.

But commonly it is not many words that are needed, rather the quiet expression of sympathy, with a short reading or appropriate prayer. It is to be assumed that mourners are open to the words of divine comfort from the scriptures and to simple, earnest supplication to the God of all grace and consolation.

At the same time those to whom the visit is made should remember that the pastor often feels constrained to wait until there is some intimation that such ministration is desired. It is to be assumed on the part of the sorrowing that the pastor comes as the bearer of consolation. He should be made to feel that his prayers are desired and longed for. If there seems to be hesitation, open the way by a request for prayer. Quietly hand him a Bible and ask for prayer and you will find there was a heart full of sympathy waiting for this opening of the way. It is thus that perfect sympathy is established.—Exchange.

"HE DIED CLIMBING."

At a certain place in the Alps there is a monument to a guide who had perished when attempting to make the ascent of the mountain. The simple inscription on the stone is, "He died climbing." It is a noble tribute to a heroic man. He was in the line of his duty. His face was forward and upward. Higher and higher was his aim, not in a vain ambition, but in the way of duty. Without fault of his own he fell, the sacrifice to duty. Not lost, not lost but living still, his simple monument telling the story of a life of pure and high aims, that shrank not from perils and death when he heard the call.

"He died climbing." The words are an inspiration to men everywhere, an example that calls others to the same faith, even though it may have the same perils. The young man dies as he comes to the age when he expected to take his place among the active workers of the world. We look at his record. He had all the vigor of youth, the high purpose, the heroic effort. Whatever of study, work or enjoyment, he was climbing up. Each year saw him at a higher point and still looking upward. Cut off in early years? Yes, but years with a record that inspires others to follow in his steps. The man in his strength falls and disappears from sight. What is his record? He was a man of noble ambitions, he saw the heights and resolutely set out for them. He knew there was a wider world, and

he climbed toward the vision of it. Whatever he did, he did well. He thought not of himself, but of others, especially of those about him, who trusted him; he worked for the public good; he endeavored to make the world better, and gave his life to the great purpose which governed it.

The old man dies. He has followed in the footsteps of Jesus. His life has been one of ministry, and of help to others over the difficult places. His thoughts were of God, and his desire was to be like him. His heart was warm and responded to every appeal and to every need. As the years passed he became better and more useful. He knew no old age, for the springs of his life were in the heights above. Climbing still. We say he died. No, he only reached a point beyond our vision. We see him no more, but he lives, and will live in the hearts of men and with God. Happy the man of whom it may be written, His effort was to be better and nearer to God. Happy the man who dies climbing.

PREPARATION FOR CHURCH SERVICE.

A Christian business man found, as many, many others have found of course, that his thoughts strayed in church, often going back to his office. He resolved that he would not be dominated by his business, but would be what he professed to be—a true worshiper in the house of God. In relating his experience he said: "Instead of accusing the preacher of dullness or old-fogyism, or thinking what a hardship it is to sit still an hour or so, I prayed earnestly! And then I went farther; I resolutely took care not to fill my mind with the sensational stuff in the Sabbath newspaper before going to church. I tried to think a little about the services before I went; I wondered sometimes what the minister would have for me that day! I set my will toward giving my attention. In the end I conquered. My business stays behind closed doors on Sabbaths nowadays."

We all should follow this man's method. First, we should be interested in church services for what they are. If we really look forward to them because of the spiritual help they bring, it will not be hard to keep our thoughts from straying to worldly matters.—Ex.

THE RICHES OF TROUBLE.

What genuine blessing have you discovered and laid hold on in this latest misfortune of yours? It makes no difference what the misfortune or affliction is, provided only it is not the disaster of deliberate sin; there is a blessing in it that God intends for your enrichment, and only yourself can defraud yourself of that gain. A middle-aged Christian man realizes this when he writes to a friend expressing his praise to God "for preservation from more serious consequences in a fall which fractured my left elbow, as well as for quickened sympathy arising from the consequent period of pain and inactivity." There is a rich asset that we may store up from every trouble; quickened sympathy for others in the same trouble; and the richest man in the world is the man of deepest and most freely expressed sympathies. How unfair we are to ourselves when we let trouble leave only its burden, instead of its uplift, in our lives!—Sunday School Times.